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### Cindy Burke, Clinical Assistant Professor, Agriculture, Nutrition, & Food Systems (COLSA) ~ Costa Rica

Cindy Burke  
*University of New Hampshire*

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UNH Global

# Cindy Burke

**Clinical Assistant Professor, Agriculture, Nutrition, & Food Systems (COLSA)  
~ Costa Rica**



The river at Establo San Rafael

In November of 2019, with the aid of a grant from the UNH Global Education Center, Cindy traveled to Costa Rica to explore the possibility of a faculty led short study abroad program in the field of natural horsemanship and equine behavior. Her goal was to identify the program that would host the students and experience first-hand the programming offered. This future course would become an offering in the Equine program with the Department of Agriculture, Nutrition and Food Systems within the College of Life Science and Agriculture. The course intends to address Natural Horsemanship, a psychology-based training platform for horses and trainers which will incorporate the principles taught at Establo San

Rafael in Puriscal. This course would allow students to further their knowledge while exploring the natural beauty of the Costa Rican countryside. Cindy experienced the programming first-hand using the five principles of natural horsemanship and combining them with the geography of Costa Rica. Discussions with the facility yielded a program for students that would include Spanish classes,

small group sessions with the horses utilizing Natural Horsemanship principles, Parelli 7 games obstacle courses, equine at liberty sessions in the arena, bareback and trail riding. During her time at the program, horses were led to the river and set free for a swim, trail rides through the topography focused on the natural horsemanship concept of rewards and consequences, and bridleless riding demonstrated the concept of pressure and release. She also traveled to a nature reserve for a night tour through the rainforest, including a stop to look at local crocodiles and hikes through a nature reserve to view sloths and monkeys. Additionally, Cindy developed a partnership for future equine program interns wanting to do their internships abroad.

Cindy and the Equine program are very grateful to UNH Global for this grant and have come away from this trip having made significant progress in the development of a new course as well as the logistical organization of the study abroad program. This was made possible thanks to the opportunity to explore Costa Rica in-person and meet with representatives of Establo San Rafael. We look forward to continuing to develop this relationship between UNH and Establo San Rafael and bringing students to Costa Rica in the near future.



Treehouse lodging where students would stay





Exploring Natural Horsemanship principles in the arena

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